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# MESSENGER

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## AIMM Marks 90 Years of Ministry

by Jim Bertsche

**A**s AIMM marks 90 years of witness and ministry on the African continent, there are three words which perhaps best capture the heart and essence of this inter-Mennonite venture of faith. They are vision, commitment and grace.

### VISION

It was, first of all, a burning vision that drove a handful of farming Mennonite



*First Executive Secretary of AIMM  
D.N. Claudon and his wife Kathryn.*

pastors and their rural church members of central Illinois in 1912 to launch an inter-Mennonite mission venture in the heart of the African continent.



*Present International Office in Elkhart.*

It was vision that led the first team of pioneering missionaries to plant four mission posts among three major tribes of their area within the first decade of their presence there.

It was vision that, in time, led AIMM missionaries to establish four additional centers which enabled them to work and witness among three more large ethnic groups.

It was vision that early spurred AIMM personnel to learn and witness in the dialects of the people among whom they lived and moved believing that the Gospel is best understood in the mother tongue of any people. It was this same vision that motivated AIMM personnel across the years to translate or revise existing Scriptures in the languages of their people.

It was the vision of literate and healthy

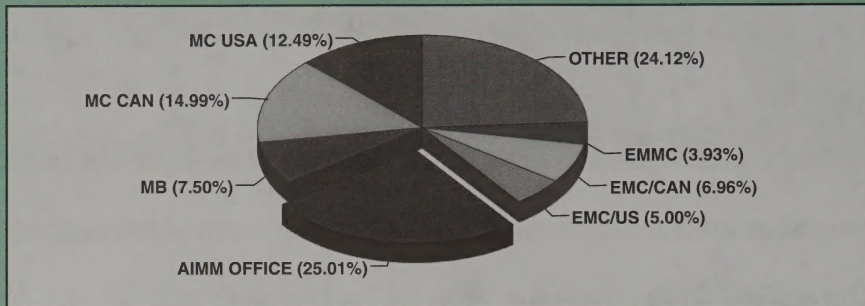
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# AIMM Revenue Sources 2002



This chart represents AIMM's 2002 budget, excluding missionary salaries. This year the AIMM home office is responsible to raise 25%, or \$115,000, of the \$459,759 total budget. The AIMM office portion is raised as you send your contributions directly to either Steinbach, Manitoba or Elkhart, Indiana. If God is challenging you to become involved with AIMM, now would be the perfect time to send your gift to:

## AIMM Canada

Box 1268  
Steinbach, MB R0A 2A0

## AIMM U.S.

59466 Country Road 113  
Elkhart, IN 46517-3644

**Thank you for your prayers and support.**

*continued from page 1*

## AIMM Marks 90 Years

Christians that early led AIMM missionaries into extensive programs of education, health care and an experimental farm.

It was the vision of an African Church led by Africans themselves that led to the early establishment of Bible training schools and joint missionary/African committees and councils which had the oversight of local congregations.

It was the vision of an inter-tribal Mennonite Church which early led to annual field-wide gatherings of church leaders in sessions of Bible study, prayer, discussion of common problems and decision making which applied to them all.

It was vision which in 1972 triggered the name change from the Congo Inland Mission to the Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, a change which signaled a deliberate shift of focus from a single country to the entire continent.

It was vision which motivated exploratory travel in the 70's in southern and western Africa which eventually resulted in also placing AIMM personnel in such widely separated areas as Botswana, Lesotho, the Transkei (South

Africa), Upper Volta (Burkina Faso), and Senegal.

And on the home end, it was the vision of an inter-Mennonite effort of witness and service in Africa that, over time, led to the formation of a Board which in its semi-annual meetings brought together representatives from six different Mennonite Conferences of North America.

## COMMITMENT

It was commitment which saw a fledgling inter-Mennonite Mission through its first shaky decade of work in Africa which in 1913 already marked its first missionary grave.

It was commitment that resisted a resolute effort in 1925 to drop a Mennonite identity and to launch into the pattern of the time known as "faith missions".

It was commitment which, during the great depression of the early 30's, saw rural Mennonite farmers sell their corn for ten cents a bushel in order to raise urgently needed passage money for new missionary volunteers.

It was commitment which saw a dozen missionary men take their families home

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amidst the explosive unrest of political independence in 1960 and return alone to the Congo for periods of up to one year.

It was commitment both on the part of African Christians and missionaries alike that held them steady amidst the brutal rebellions of the Kwilu and the Stanleyville areas of '64-'65 and saw them emerge from those experiences as witnesses to God's enabling power.

And it was commitment which characterized a broadening network of supporting and praying constituency here in North America that undergirded AIMM's expanding ministry in Africa.

## GRACE

But above all else, it has been God's marvelous grace which has surrounded

all that has transpired and made possible all that has been accomplished.

It is God's grace that has achieved miraculous change in the lives of many thousands of Africans as they turned in trusting faith, within their cultural setting, to the One who declared "I am the way, the truth and the life."

It is God's grace that has attended the simple and faithful witness of multiplied hundreds of pastors, evangelists, teachers and lay folk who, within the context of their isolated, rural settings, shared and continue to share the "good news" with those around them.

It is by God's grace that today there exist three autonomous Mennonite Churches in the Congo (two stemming from the work of AIMM and one from the ministry of our neighboring Mennonite

Brethren Mission) plus a newly formed Mennonite Church in Burkina Faso with a combined membership that is approaching 200,000 believers.

## AND WHAT OF THE FUTURE?

The year 2002 finds AIMM amidst change of historic proportions. In terms of Christian mission, it is clear that there is a sea of change under way. Former mind sets, former patterns of ministry, former guidelines, former statements of visions and goals clearly must be revisited and reformulated.

The two flames of vision and commitment are ours to keep burning and to transmit to those who follow us. As this is done, we may rest assured that God's grace as it has ever been, will continue in abundant supply.

# Lesotho Church Leaders Train Others

**Compiled by Leona Schrag**

**E**ach year church leaders related to the Africa Federal Church Council in Lesotho meet together for inspiration and reporting. Bryan Born, AIMM worker who served as a resource person at the 2002 annual meeting, reported good times of discussion and prayer. Nine churches were represented. Bishop Setumo, who leads a group in Maseru, reported issuing certificates to nine people who completed the course.

In teaching sessions Bryan focused first on being in a right relationship with

God and using the power of Christ who dwells within us. The second session centered on youth/elder relations. Youth were encouraged to earn the respect of elders by the way they live, and elders encouraged to give youth a chance to minister. When youth do not sense opportunity for ministry they often leave the church and find another which offers more leadership potential.

A recent development in the AFCC may bring new vision and revitalization. In May, seven Basotho attended a course in Nairobi on HIV/AIDS ministry. The course coordinated by the Nairobi office of the Organization of African Independent Churches (OAIC) trained trainers in HIV/AIDS ministry with the goal of these trained people going out to mobilize others in the churches to respond to the AIDS crisis.

On the local church level, one pastor reported by letter that on Christmas the church was



*Praising the Lord in dance and procession.*



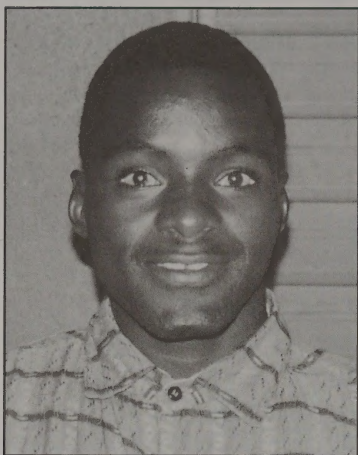
*Leading worship in a Lesotho Church.*

so full they had to celebrate communion outside of the sanctuary. He also indicated alarming hunger this spring because of the lateness of planting and the abundance of rain. Farmers were not able to get into their fields with the combines which would sink down into the mud. Some threshed wheat by hand and some threshed by having animals walk over it. With a very limited supply, when one does find corn to buy, the price is extremely high. Often none is available at any price.

Pray for the continued building of God's church in Lesotho. The AFCC has requested that AIMM send others to work with them. Ask God to provide workers - and listen carefully to determine if you are the answer to that prayer.



# Pastor Traoré Anticipates Church Growth



*Pastor Benjamin Traoré.*

**By Chris Lehman**

**I**n the village of Djigouera, Pastor Benjamin Traoré has a flock of 24. The Evangelical Mennonite Church he leads in this secluded corner of Burkina Faso exists only in the sense that a church consists of a body of believers. The church meets at 9 o'clock on Sunday mornings under the shade of a mango tree, which provides more than adequate protection from the blistering West African sun. When it's too windy, the congregation gathers in a local storefront.

The 29-year-old pastor attended Bible school in nearby Mali, and has been in Djigouera since August 2001. His vision is

simple: church growth. "Our goal is to reach the town of Djigouera for Christ." Traoré says he's used everything from door-to-door evangelism to week-long crusades. A recent such campaign featured singing, preaching, and a film. It even attracted some of the village leaders. "The two Imams came for every meeting and stayed the whole meeting. The village Chief came once, and the head nurse also came, as well as the director of the school."

AIMM assisted the church with partial funding for this campaign and had earlier purchased the PA system and video equipment. Through such collaboration, AIMM works with the local church in evangelism and church planting, when the church planting is in a multi-ethnic situation where the trade language is used of necessity.



*From left to right: Pastor Traoré, the Chief's wife, the Chief of Djigouera standing in the shade of the mango tree under which the congregation meets.*



Benjamin first heard about Christianity at age nine. "I was with my father. I got to know about the gospel from a Catholic priest. At that time I didn't know the difference between Protestants and Catholics because I was so young." Later, he spent time with a Burkinabé pastor named Phillipe, and he began baptismal classes. In December 1987, he was baptized.

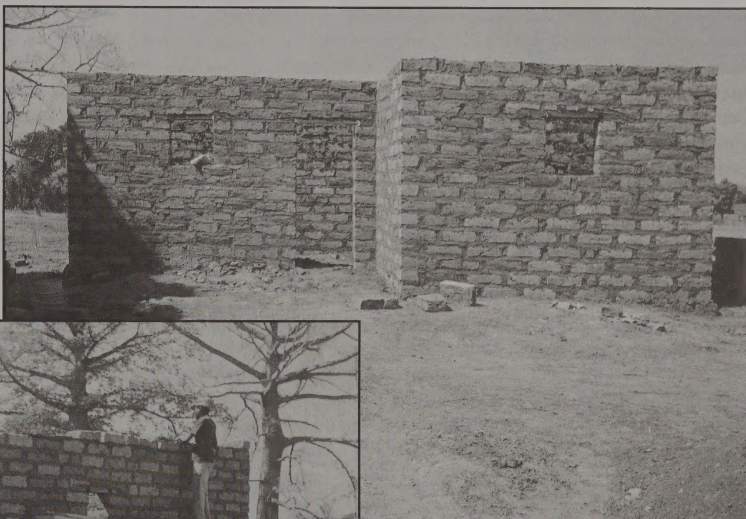
Religious life in Djigouera tends to fall in two camps: the Muslims and those who practice animism, or traditional ancestor worship. While Pastor Traoré feels it is important to collaborate with members of other faiths for the betterment of the community, he makes no secret of his intentions. In fact, three of the recent converts in the village have been two of the Chief's sons and one of the Chief's three wives. Chief Kolufa, on the other hand, practices animism. A

where to find forgiveness. And this leads a lot of people to idolatry and making sacrifices."

When Benjamin spreads the word about the power of God, he simply shares about how Jesus Christ has worked in his life. "Jesus Christ has done so much for me," says Benjamin. "He gave me joy. Not only joy, but also life, and He forgave my sins. He protects me, and that makes me very joyful."

congregation grows as more people are converted to Christianity. If that's the case, it might be back to the mango tree.

While Benjamin has encountered little open hostility from non-Christians in Djigouera, one man warned him that the place where his home is being built is on a path where a demon or a possessed person used to travel. Benjamin told the man that he was not afraid. "The power that I believe in and dedicate myself to is much



*Construction of Pastor Traoré's home. The church will likely meet here when the home is completed.*

**"Jesus Christ has done so much for me," says Benjamin. "He gave me joy. Not only joy, but also life, and He forgave my sins. He protects me, and that makes me very joyful."**

stump where he sacrifices chickens is evident in front of his hut, which—like most in the village—is made of mud bricks and a grass roof.

Pastor Benjamin uses the existence of traditional religious beliefs to his advantage when he evangelizes. For instance, he says most villagers already have a basic concept about the existence of sin. "They know they have sin and they need to be forgiven," says Traoré. "The problem they encounter is

The Mennonite Church in Djigouera is one of six in the Evangelical Mennonite Church of Burkina Faso (Eglise Evangélique Mennonite du Burkina Faso - EEMBF). While the congregation in Djigouera meets outside, that may change when a house being built for Traoré is completed. At that time, Benjamin hopes to conduct services in his living room. But he acknowledges that there won't be enough room to hold services there if, as is his goal, the

greater than the power that passes by here. So I have no fear." He told the man that "the demon that you consider strong and powerful, he was created too. And it's that Creator that I believe in."

Nevertheless, Traoré desires prayer from believers in North America. "We can do all things when we pray. And with their prayers we will be able to work well here. By collaborating with brothers and sisters far away, we can encourage each other and help each other."



# Cyber Café Blesses Many People

"We pondered your love-in-action, God, waiting in your temple: Your name, God, evokes a train of Hallelujahs wherever it is spoken, near and far; your arms are heaped with goodness-in-action."

—Psalm 48:8-9, from *The Message*

**G**od's faithfulness and goodness-in-action has been our strength this past year in Senegal! We have seen His hand at work as we pondered how to become more involved in the life of our community. The business team that came in September proposed that we open a cyber café here in town, and we worked to that end during the months of October through March, along with our discipleship activities. Since April 1, the cyber café has been operational, and we are already seeing that it is a blessing to many people.

A training of the café workers and two other believers in Biblical business principles was fruitful. The following principles were discussed: keep out of unnecessary debt, disciple others, fund God's work, provide for needs, be accountable, provide a quality product, honor credi-

tors, treat people fairly, and generate a profit. These are not lofty, obscure goals for us to fantasize about; rather, they are indicators of whether we are serious about dedicating this business to the Lord. The topics generated lively discussions as the group considered things from an angle that sometimes is at odds with accepted cultural practices here.

A "seeker" is the night guardian of the café, living in a small room at the front of the café. Two followers of Jesus are the hosts of the café, one that has had training in computer operation and one that is responsible for serving coffee to the clients. We are open each evening for four hours and will add hours as we are able. Each evening, we start our work with a time of prayer, and we're now excited to see the workers take ownership in this and other aspects of the business.

One of our clients says he is going to

try to get all his teacher friends to come to the café, because the atmosphere is so calm and all the computers work well. Another said it took her an hour and a half to write three e-mails elsewhere in town because of old and malfunctioning computers, and she could do it in minutes at this new café! We also have some Bibles and some other good reading material on several tables which has been a blessing to several workers and clients.

Discipling the new believers through daily life events and many conversations is a continual joy and challenge. We are also using a cassette series called *The Way of Righteousness*, a chronological study through the Bible. We often find ourselves asking the Lord for wisdom when asked for our perspective on questions about marriage, family, health, and temptations of many kinds. Some questions of the past week have been about



Working on a sign to invite clients to have a taste of Brazilian coffee, roasted in Dakar by some followers of Jesus there.



the Trinity, about our relationship to Jewish people, and about the stance of the U.S. in relation to Israel and Palestine.

The generosity and hospitality we experience and see here is one of the many areas in which we are being stretched. Many here would give their food money and only available cash for the coming week to someone in need without hesitation, trusting others to help them out when they are in a pinch.

May mercy, peace and love be yours in abundance (Jude 2), and may the Lord continue to show each of us our place in ministering life and healing to those around us.

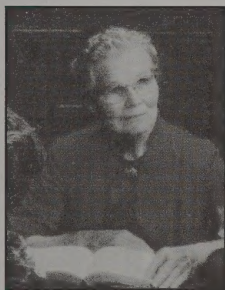


*Two of the café employees, both followers of Jesus, are learning more and more about the resources on the Internet as they run the café.*

## Selma Unruh Frantz 1913-2002

**by Martini Janz**

*(from AIMM files and remembrances)*



**H**er African name was Mama Bongela, meaning “to make things nice or to straighten them out”.

But long before she had this name, as a young Bible School student in Freeman, South Dakota Selma saw a vision of African children with raised hands, calling her “to come over and help us”.

She kept this vision ever before her as she finished her schooling to become a teacher.

In 1945 Selma was commissioned to serve in Africa with the General Conference Mennonite Church Mission Board (Commission on Overseas Mission) and the Congo Inland Mission which later became Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission.

She was assigned to Nyanga station to work in the primary school. She wrote, “when I saw the village people, I loved them and was glad that I had come to tell them about Jesus.”.

We met her at Nyanga in 1951 as our neighbor. Often early evening, we would see her sitting quietly on a chair-like stump in her front yard watching the sun set behind the hills. Selma was not a wave-maker. Rather she was a quiet, committed, conscientious, faithful servant of God. At Nyanga she was asked to take charge of the dispensary and the maternity for a nine month period due to the illness of a missionary nurse. She enjoyed the work, especially comforting the mothers who lost their babies.

Later, Selma was asked to help in the primary school and to

supervise the primary school girls’ compound at Kandala station. In July of 1960, at the time of Congo’s independence, Selma was evacuated with the other Kandala missionaries to Angola and back to America. She writes, “we wanted to stay but God saw otherwise....Imagine, in 15 days I arrived safely on my parent’s doorstep in Kansas - but my heart stayed in Africa”.

She taught school for three years in Kansas and was finally able to return to Kandala in August of 1963. Again, she helped with the girls’ compound and also taught classes in the Bible Institute, which had been moved to Kandala for safety reasons. Occasionally on a week-end she and the chauffeur would travel to the villages to have services. She was thrilled to report that a number of villagers made first time commitments and others came to make things right with God.

After only five months at Kandala, Selma experienced a “baptism by fire”. The Mulele rebels of Kwilu Province overran Kandala, burnt the church, the missionary houses, destroying most everything in their path and taking the missionaries hostage. A fellow missionary says, “she was amazing - she was so calm!” After three long days a United Nations helicopter landed on the soccer field, picked up the missionaries and flew them to safety at Tshikapa.

When Selma arrived back in Kansas in February of 1964, she went back to teaching school. In August of 1966 Selma’s mother suffered a stroke and she lovingly took care of her until her death. Selma’s giving, generous spirit was evident in all she did. When after many years, Cornelius Frantz came back into her life, she wrote the office about it and in closing expressed her joy over what was happening. Selma was so delighted with her newly acquired family. It seems appropriate that she left us in the midst of a meal with her family. We rejoice with Selma! As one colleague wrote in an e-mail, “thanks for the news of the ‘trumpet call’ for Selma. A good and gentle woman with many spiritual children”.



# "A Pilgrim's Journey of Faith": Tatlhelelo Khaisa

**Compiled by Tim Bertsche**

**M**y spiritual journey began when I was a little girl. I attended church with my mother in our village of Gootau, 280 kms north of the capital Gaborone. I began to read the Bible at primary school, sounding out the words. Like the pastor's messages at my mother's church, it was difficult to understand.

By the time I was 12, I stopped schooling in order to help my mother at

were married, I joined his church and the following year I gave birth to my first of eleven children, Florence. That is why I am called Mma Florence.

Our life in Marobela was not easy. My husband Ephraim taught at the primary school. His salary was often paid several months late. We farmed the land and raised livestock. I sold bread baked in a cast iron kettle over a fire to supplement our income. We were very poor and lived by the sweat of our brows.

I used to walk long distances to gather firewood and draw water from the river. One day as I returned home carrying a

so that they can have a better life. And please prepare for each one a marriage partner who will be kind and loving to ease their way through life."

This prayer became a daily ritual. As I returned home, I would step off the path, unload the bundle from my head and the burden from my heart.

In 1991 we moved to Francistown. I left my life of farming and got a cleaning job at a Nurse's Training School. Ephraim took a job teaching literacy classes to inmates at the local prison. My youngest children all found places in primary school. Three of the older ones



*Mma in church uniform praying at home.*

home. It was during this time I felt in my heart that I wanted to know more about God. Looking back now, I can see that God was already drawing me to Him. In 1966 while visiting relatives I attended Holy Christian Church in Marobela village. It was there I met my husband. We

child on my back and a load of wood on my head, I stopped in the bush and put the bundle down. I kneeled and prayed "My God, I do not want my children to struggle through life in this way. With all my heart I ask you for only two things. Please help my children to go to school

went on to get degrees at the University of Botswana. My youngest child is now in grade 3.

God has answered my prayers. He gave my children exactly what I desired—an education. The elder ones are now marrying and have started their





*Mma Florence cleaning window at work.*

own homes. I believe that God, in His gracious love spoke to me even while I did not understand everything about him. He drew me to him and helped me realize that if I trusted and honored Him, he would guide me and show me his faithfulness. I began to understand the goodness and love of God and wanted to know more about Him.

In 1988 I was given a letter of invitation by Rev. Tim Bertsche to attend Bible Classes sponsored by the Mennonites. I was surprised to receive such an invitation at just the time I wanted to study God's Word. Believing this was from the hand of God, I committed myself to attend these classes.

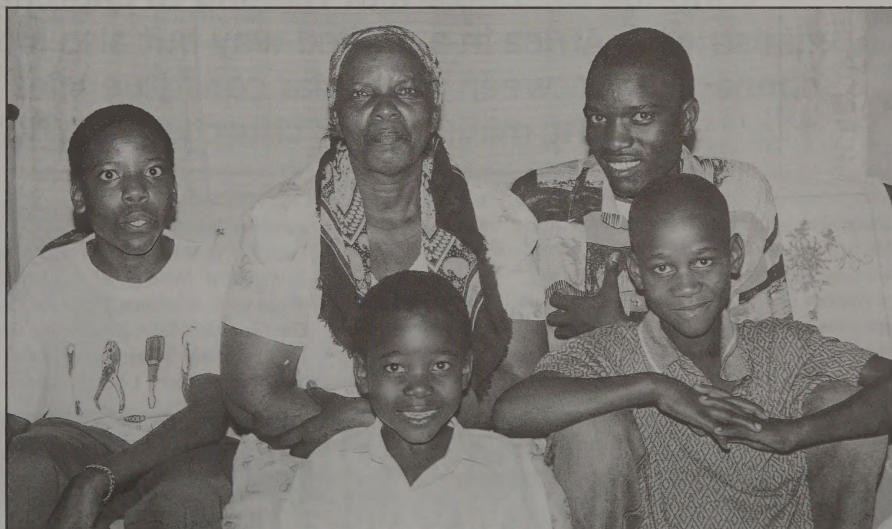
I can truthfully say that these two years of Bible study have changed my life. One book entitled "The Christian

Life" helped me understand that Christ has the power to make me a new creature and give me the strength to live for him. Our studies gave me the courage to leave some of the traditional Setswana practices like speaking to ancestors and sacrifices. Jesus became my Defender as I sought to place my full faith and trust in Him while living among those who do not understand. Through I was baptized years ago into my husband's church, examining the Scriptures for myself and discussing with others this new journey helped me to grow.

My life has many difficulties. It is not always easy to follow Christ wholeheartedly. However, I feel the peace that comes from knowing Christ Jesus and his love for me. My joy is in the certainty of this truth and that it can never be taken away from me.

Today my husband and I are pastors in the Tabernacle Christian Church. At the moment we hold services in our home. We are seeking for land on which to build a building. My prayer is that my whole family will come to know the saving power and love of God so that they will be saved. Before I knew Christ I was dead. I want others to know this joy that I have found. My desire is to live and work for Him so that others can receive what I have been given.

*Tim Bertsche is supported by the Evangelical Mennonite Church U.S.*



*Mma Florence with 4 youngest sons.*



# AIMM's Venture into New Partnership for the Gospel

**Peter H. Rempel, AIMM Chairperson**

**A**t its annual meeting on April 5-6, 2002, the Council of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission passed a three-part motion to create distinct partnership councils to oversee each of its current ministries and to create a networking structure to relate these councils to one another. It set January 1, 2004 as the date for implementing the new organization.

The intention and hope is that this restructuring will continue the pattern of relating to churches and ministries in Africa in a unified way but also intensify the connection between particular constituencies in NA and specific ministries or churches in Africa. Each of the North American Mennonite mission agencies presently within AIMM is being invited to commit to participating in the council(s) for one or more of AIMM's current ministries. The partnership councils will also provide a structure wherein AIMM's partner churches in the Democratic Republic (DR) of Congo and Burkina Faso can participate in decision-making about ministries of interest to them.

In addition to separate meetings of each council as needed and possible, the councils will also meet jointly at regular intervals. These will be occasions for sharing information, considering topics of common concern, coordinating joint initiatives and

long-term mission worker of AIMM in DR Congo, conducted the review and returned in October 2001 with the main recommendation that AIMM become a networking, facilitating and educating agency.

The current ministries of AIMM are:

1. Support for Mennonite churches in DR Congo,
2. Scripture translation, evangelism and church planting among several ethnic groups in southwest Burkina Faso, and support for the Mennonite Church of Burkina Faso,
3. Bible teaching and HIV/AIDS Counseling with "African Initiated Churches" in southern Africa (Botswana, South Africa and Lesotho), and
4. Evangelism and church planting among a large ethnic group in a West African country.

Hitherto these ministries have been governed by a council of all AIMM members, administered by a central staff based in Elkhart, Indiana and supported by contributions from all AIMM

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**The intention and hope is that this restructuring will continue the pattern of relating to churches and ministries in Africa in a unified way but also intensify the connection between particular constituencies in NA and specific ministries or churches in Africa.**

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connecting with shared counterparts. Some functions such as fund-raising could also be shared and coordinated through a networking structure.

Various developments within AIMM and within its member agencies as well as broader developments in international missions and church relations, prompted the AIMM Council to review its purposes and organization. Rick Derksen, a former

members. Members of AIMM are the mission agencies of the Evangelical Mennonite Church (EMC International Ministries), Evangelical Mennonite Conference, Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference, Mennonite Brethren conferences of Canada and of USA (Mennonite Brethren Missions and Service International), Mennonite Church Canada (WITNESS), and Mennonite Church USA (Mennonite Mission Network).

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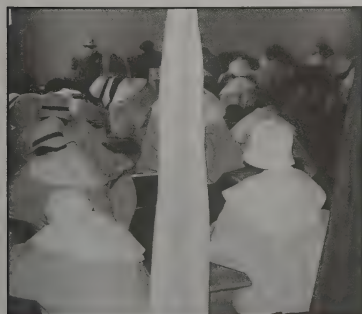
# TourMagination Tour to Mennonite World Conference Assembly with Jonathan Larson

by Wilmer Martin

**M**id-afternoon on Monday, August 11, 2003, will be a time of great excitement in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe when the opening session of the Mennonite World Conference Assembly (Africa 2003) begins on the theme "Sharing Gifts in Suffering and Joy." Thousands of people from all over the globe will be congregating in Bulawayo for this event. This occasion to meet, share, fellowship and worship with Mennonite brothers and sisters will provide opportunity to truly learn from one another. The Sunday morning worship service concludes the Assembly on August 17.

TourMagination, based in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, and in Sellersville, Pennsylvania, USA, is leading a total of eight different tours around Africa that all include attendance at the Mennonite World Conference as part of the tour. Each tour is unique and led by tour leaders who have experience working and living in Africa. This ensures that participants truly experience the people, food, culture and stories of the countries, making each tour a wonderful experience.

One tour, "The Drama of Southern Africa: Zionists, Struggle (and Mennonites)", is being led by Jonathan Larson along with his wife, Mary Kay, and Henry Landes, TourMagination partner.



*Worshipping in an African Indigenous Church.*



*Leaders of the Cornelius Christian Church in Selebi-Phikwe, Botswana.*

Jonathan and Mary Kay, children of India missionaries, first went to central Africa as MCC teachers in 1971. In 1981, they were assigned to work in Botswana as Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission workers supported by the General Conference Mennonite Church. Mary Kay became involved in public health and Jonathan worked as a resource teacher for African indigenous church leaders. As a result of his interest in traditional wisdom and his frequent use of proverbs and stories in his work, Jonathan acquired an African name, "Rra Diane", or "Mr. Proverbs. In 1994, Jonathan and Mary Kay returned to North America where Jonathan now pastors at the Berea Mennonite Church in Atlanta, Georgia. He is presently helping to plan Mennonite Church USA Assembly 2003, hosted in Atlanta. Jonathan is no stranger to leading groups to Mennonite World Conference Assembly, as he led a group of Mennonites to the Assembly in Calcutta, India in 1997.

During this tour, Jonathan will show

you sites such as the beautiful port city of Durban, South Africa, and the Traces of Gandhi's Work; Soweto, steeped in apartheid history; the remains of David Livingstone's house in Botswana; and the home of the late prophet, Mokale, who was instrumental in welcoming Mennonites to Botswana and in establishing the Spiritual Healing Church, one of the most prominent indigenous churches in the country. You will meet Mennonite workers and hear their stories.

You are guaranteed to see some of the most spectacular scenery in the world including a visit to Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe, which is actually five separate falls plunging 330 feet into the chasm that separates Zimbabwe from Zambia.

Please contact TourMagination (1-800-565-0451) if you are interested in seeing Africa through the eyes of our premier storyteller, Jonathan Larson. This tour is guaranteed to open your eyes to a view of the world that you never thought possible.



# Shining the Spotlight on a Renewed Mennonite Church

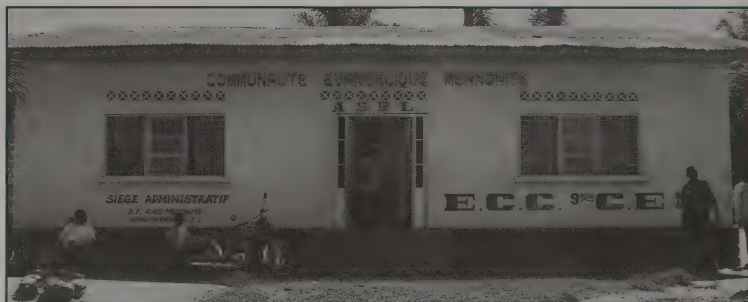
by Garry Priebe

**F**lying from Kinshasa to Mbuji-Mayi took us over regions that are barely passable by ground transportation due to the eroded road system in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Mbuji Mayi, the sprawling metropolis of nearly one million inhabitants and capital of the diamond-rich East Kasai Province, is home to the administrative offices of the Evangelical Mennonite Church (Communauté Mennonite - CEM).

After landing we became acutely aware that we were on the edge of government/rebel controlled territories. We could see armored government military units guarding the airport. Troops were strategically placed around bridges and in significant areas. We were told that rebel forces were poised 100 kilometers away ready to advance on this prized city.

The nervous tension we had felt at the airport going through formalities subsided when we saw the broad smile and felt the warm, welcoming embrace of Rev. Misakabu, President of CEM. A reception of well wishers greeted us and soon we were whisked away in a new, rented, air-conditioned vehicle on good asphalt roads to the Dipumba Plaine Church for the worship service. It was Sunday noon and the place was packed. The singing was fantastic. The special music by two choirs composed of boys and young men elevated our spirits. Rev. Misakabu's message, to "Go and make disciples" was riveting and inspiring.

CEM, which today has a membership of 21,000 scattered from Kinshasa to the Katanga Province, came into existence during the tumultuous decade of the 1960s following the country's independence. It is a sister church to the larger Mennonite Church of Congo (Communauté Mennonite au Congo - CMCco). CEM and CMCco are connected historically through the mission efforts of what used to be known as Congo Inland Mission (now AIMM) and are united in



*Central Office of the CEM in Mbuji Mayi.*

certain outreach ventures. Today both churches are involved in an inter-Mennonite committee to plant Mennonite churches in eastern Congo.

CEM, burdened in the past with leadership struggles and frictions, has emerged in the past five years to experience unity, peace and purpose. The Church recently completed a plan of action for the years 2001-2005. In this document church leaders listed various problems that face the Church and nation in general. The list included such things as hunger, war, price gouging, price instabilities, theft, arbitrary arrest, dependence, ignorance, calamity, corruption, tribalism, injustice, proliferation of sects and sickness. They also listed favorable factors such as the need for training in income generating activities, for peace education and the need to take control of their situations. They noted a spirit of wanting to work together in groups. They listed private initiatives and local efforts.

In general, we too sensed a spirit of optimism. CEM seemed to be a church "on the go"—a church that had assessed its strengths and weaknesses and determined where it wanted to be in the next five years. In meetings with the AIMM



*Welcome prepared for the visiting AIMM delegation.*

delegation, Rev. Misakabu and his leadership team shared some exciting things happening within the life of the Church.

- The church youth are organized and have days of praise, prayer and intercession. They also have choral groups that practice throughout the week and sing on Sundays.
- The Coordinator of Schools stated that CEM has 31 primary and 3 secondary schools.
- The Church has created a Mennonite Partners Group which is staffed by businessmen. Their purpose is to work together with the Church leadership to help with the completion of church projects. This group recently placed a roof on the Lukelenge Church building and constructed two other churches with no outside help. They have also given assistance



to agricultural and animal husbandry type projects. They have assisted CEM in funding and starting a CEM radio program on the topic of evangelism which is being aired every Wednesday from 8 am to 9 am in Mbuji-Mayi.

Church leadership expressed thanks to the AIMM delegation for our partnership

and some of the funding we have been able to offer for various programs. In 2001 we gave eight scholarships for CEM students and this year we gave another seven so students could attend schools of higher learning.

As we look to the future we anticipate good things for CEM. We are thankful to God for the peace and unity being experi-

enced within the Church. We are grateful for the vision of its leadership and the desire to work together as a team. We encourage your prayers for CEM, its members and for Rev. Misakabu, a man of humble spirit who seeks to lead CEM in achieving great things for the glory of God.

## Tina Quiring 1912-2002

by Jim Bertsche



**T**he story of the CIM/AIMM would be very different were it not for the tremendous contribution of the many single women who were part of its missionary staff across the years. Their lot was neither simple nor easy. For many, their assignments took them to the isolation of bush stations. Though usually situated

with missionary couples and families who sought to be supportive and helpful, there inevitably came those times, at the end of the day, when in the solitude of their own living quarters, they were left to their own resources to hold loneliness at bay. Typically serving in support ministries in classrooms, dispensaries and among women and children, their service has often been low profile in nature and, consequently, has at times not been recognized as it might have been.

Yet records reveal that across its 90 year history, roughly 20 percent of the Mission's active missionary personnel has been comprised of single women. They have come to us from across our inter-Mennonite supporting network of churches with a deep certainty of God's leading in their lives. They have also come at peace with themselves regarding their single state as they applied for service, believing that in God's purpose for them there was a place and ministry which they and they alone could fill.

Among this corps of devoted women was Tina Quiring.

Born into the home of a rural Mennonite pastor, she was one of three sisters who eventually found their way to Africa under the sponsorship of COM and CIM/AIMM. After earning a degree in Biblical studies she taught for a number of years in the Berean Bible Academy of Elbing, KS. During that time she became increasingly aware of the CIM/AIMM, its growing ministry in the Congo and its need for more recruits. Ever sensitive to the Lord's leading in her life she applied to this board for service and was promptly accepted. Following her commissioning service in September of 1949, she spent a year in Brussels, Belgium studying the French language and taking courses required by the Belgian colonial regime of that time.

In the Congo she served her first two terms at Djoko Punda where her time was divided between the girls school and a two year training program for young men being groomed for service in village schools as Christian teachers.

In 1960 her Congo service was interrupted by the violence of political independence. As soon as it was thought safe for women to return, Tina was among the first to volunteer to go back. She was then stationed at Tshikapa located just across the Kasai River from the AIMM station Kalonda. From 1962 until her retirement in 1976, the focus of her attention was the distribution of Christian literature through a network of book shops.

Those who learned to know Mama Tina well will remember her always for at least the following five characteristics:

- 1) Her quick smile and her well developed "funny bone". She enjoyed a good joke and she had a gift for seeing the humorous side of things.
- 2) Her punctuality. Tina was always on time. While at Tshikapa she owned a little VW "bug" which she drove around town on her many errands to the post office, to the various book shops of the area and to her office at the church headquarters. A stick shift vehicle with four or five gears, Mama Tina rarely got beyond second gear. Every week day morning she started her rounds promptly at 6:30 AM. Other missionaries living nearby often observed that they had no need of personal alarm clocks. When they heard Mama Tina's little bug go putt-putting by their homes, they knew it was time to get up and start their day as well.
- 3) Her restless energy. Tina was always busy. Perhaps it was unpacking a new shipment of Gospels. Sometimes it was producing lesson guides on her office mimeograph. Or maybe it was inventory time at one of the book shops.
- 4) Her enthusiasm for her work. At any missionary gathering she was eager to share news from her department and usually had proposals for expanding ministry via the printed page. Impatient with barriers to progress, she often asked, "How can we get this ball a-rollin'?"
- 5) Her conviction that, in the long term, nothing was more important for the African Church than to produce and place God's Word in the hands of African believers in their own mother tongues.

Your AIMM colleagues salute you, Mama Tina, for a life fully lived and thank you for the blessing you've been to all who have learned to know you...Africans and missionaries alike.



# Sparks Among the Ashes: AIDS in South Africa

By Brian Dyck

**A**s we sat down for tea, Mavis Tshandu pulled out a photo of a young man, age 22, who had visited her home in Idutywa a few days earlier. He had returned to his nearby home from Johannesburg where he had been working. His face was gaunt and pale. His neck was a stick protruding out of a t-shirt. We knew right away what his problem was: AIDS.

More than 4.2 million people, or about one in five, South Africans are HIV positive — more than any other country in the world. The signs of death are everywhere. Funeral announcements in the region's newspaper, the *Daily Dispatch*, show bright-looking young people with birth dates in the 1960's, 70's and 80's. Walking the streets of Umtata, one sees many young women dressed in the dark dress, with matching cape and head scarf — the uniform of the recently widowed. Driving in the rural areas one notes many large tents set up at homes signalling the preparation for a funeral.

The signs are obvious of a huge crisis, yet many people do not want to talk about it. When a young person dies, the death is attributed to tuberculosis, or pneumonia. While this may be true, it is AIDS that made them vulnerable to these treatable diseases. At funerals of a young person the topic is avoided. People say, "he just got sick and died," or more recently, "she ate poison, we don't know why."

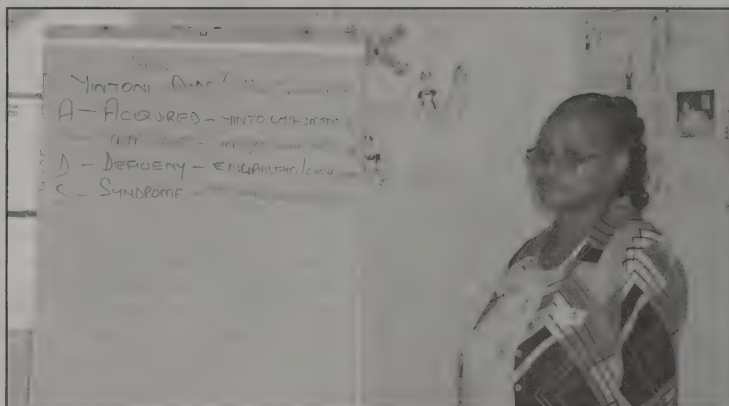
Until recently, the government has also averted its eyes from the problem. President Thabo Mbeki, an intelligent, capable man who is Internet savvy,

refused to deal constructively with this disease at every turn. He publically questioned the link between HIV and AIDS. His Health Minister has balked at providing Nevirapin for HIV positive pregnant women, a simple and inexpensive way to reduce mother-to-child transmission of the disease. In April they began to change their policies but it is still a huge problem.

Strong church leadership is clearly a key to this problem. Last year we felt the call to do more to prevent the spread of HIV and AIDS, and minister to those

When one young man came to her clinic, he was so weak, he had to be carried in by his father and a friend. He had stopped eating because sores in his mouth made it too painful. He carried a letter from a Johannesburg doctor saying that he had tuberculosis. Mavis asked him if he had been coughing. When he said he hadn't she said, "You don't have TB, you have AIDS." The three men looked down at the ground. Mavis said, "No, don't look down, we are all adults here, we can talk about this." She told the

young man, "You can live a fulfilling and healthy life if you take care of yourself." Then she instructed her assistant to make a broth and cook some vegetables. She fed the man and sent him home with some herbal medicines, and instructions on how to take care of himself. A few days later, the man was up and walking around the yard. A week later he returned to Mavis' clinic looking a lot healthier.



*Mavis Tshandu teaching at the Bethany Bible School conference in Mt. Ayliff in March of this year.*

who have the disease. We owe this in large part to Nicta Lubaale, a Ugandan from the Organization of African Independent Churches (OAIC) who came to Umtata to do a workshop on AIDS for a small group of leaders from our program; one of those leaders was Mavis Tshandu.

Mavis, who is trained as a nurse and runs a small clinic out of a house in Idutywa, has made AIDS ministry an important part of her life. Last October, when the OAIC offered to send someone from our program to Zambia for further training, we chose Mavis. Since returning she has coordinated our AIDS education and outreach work. Under her leadership we are launching the Transkei AIDS Support Organisation (TASO). She has also become known in her community as someone who will take AIDS seriously.

Since we started talking about AIDS exciting things have been happening. We hear stories of churches leading prayer services and people coming forward afterwards to say, "Now I know someone cares for me." We hear of pastors going to clinics to do counselling. We hear of a church going to an AIDS hospice to hold a worship service.

The churches we work with are reaching out in new ways to make a difference in their communities. While there are many reasons for despair as one looks at the situation of AIDS in South Africa, there are nevertheless some sparks of hope in the ashes of the society. It is our hope that we can help fan those small signs of hope so they can grow.

*Brian Dyck is supported by Mennonite Church Canada.*



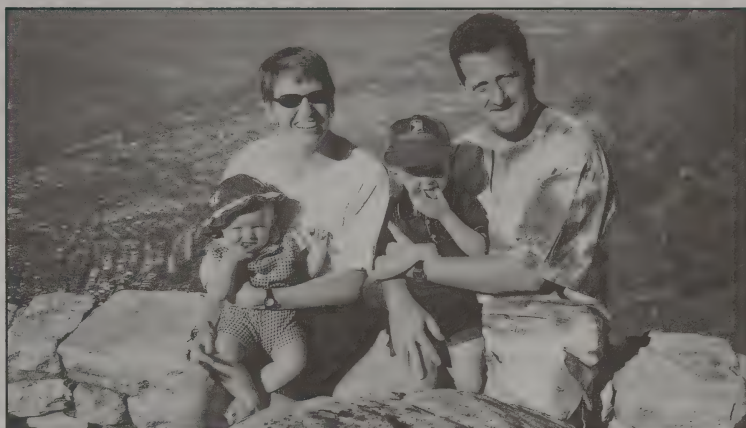
# Mennonite World Conference General Assembly Tour

**Democratic Republic of Congo,  
South Africa, & Zimbabwe  
August 01-22, 2003**

**T**he first Mennonite World Conference (MWC) global assembly to be held in Africa is being hosted by the Brethren in Christ Church of Zimbabwe August 11-17, 2003.

In conjunction with this major event for the global Mennonite church, a three-week tour is being planned which will include attendance at the MWC Africa 2003 Assembly Gathered in Zimbabwe, a one-week visit to the Congolese Mennonite churches in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and several days at the end of the tour in the wondrous Capetown area of South Africa.

The tour begins in the Democratic Republic of Congo which is home to the second largest population of Mennonites in the world (only the United States has more Mennonites)! The stay in Congo will include visits to Mennonite churches and initiatives in the capital city of Kinshasa as well as a visit to one of the cities that houses a Mennonite conference headquarters in the interior of the country. So, the experience will be both "urban" and "rural" and will explore different realities of the Mennonite church in Congo.



*Tour leaders, Bruce and Ann Campbell-Janz with their children on Table Mountain.*

The next stop on the tour will be the MWC General Assembly in Zimbabwe, a major country in southern Africa. This event follows the MWC General Assembly, India 1997, which was held in Calcutta in January 1997. Bulawayo is the second largest city in Zimbabwe and home to the headquarters of the Brethren in Christ Church of Zimbabwe. MWC General Assembly provides the opportunity for us to find practical ways to share our varied gifts with each other as sisters and brothers in the global Anabaptist church.

Our final destination on the African

continent - the area around Capetown, South Africa - is considered one of the most beautiful places on earth! With Table Mountain, the Cape of Good Hope, and verdant valleys surrounding the city (to mention just a few of the wonders!), one is presented with a marvelous array of natural beauty to visit and enjoy. This will be an ideal time to relax and enjoy God's creation in preparation for the group's return home.

The tour, being organized in conjunction with Menno Travel Service (MTS), will be led by Ann and Bruce Campbell-Janz. They are familiar with all of the sites to be visited and particularly in Congo where they served as Mennonite Central Committee Country Representatives from 1996-2001. For more information, Ann and Bruce can be contacted at: 6104 Silken Laumann Way, Mississauga, ON L5V 1A1 CANADA; Tel: (905) 542-2746; e-mail: mayebo@web.ca. For more information on Mennonite World Conference and the Africa 2003 event, visit the MWC web-site at: [www.mwc-cmm.org](http://www.mwc-cmm.org).

Whether you want to discover new people and places or reconnect with important parts of your life, this tour is for you! Please express your interest early as space is limited.



*Visiting Mennonite Churches in Congo.*



# Missionaries Who Returned to Africa

**Tim & Laura Bertsche**  
**David, Maria, Erik**



During a two-month NAA over Thanksgiving and Christmas, Tim, Laura, David (17), Maria (15), and Erik (13) Bertsche divided their time between La Crosse, WI, Goshen, IN and Morton, IL. Tim and Laura made presentations in several churches, schools, and fellowship groups. They also visited many family members and friends. In late January, 2002 they returned to Francistown, Botswana for their fifth AIMM term. Tim will continue Bible teaching and leadership training work with AIC leaders. Laura's involvements include teaching life skills at the high school their children attend, working with an interchurch HIV/AIDS ministry, and providing leadership for a women's Bible study group. Both have been working with a group of inter-church youth who have organized several weekend seminars to spread the message of abstinence. The youth group is currently working to open a Youth Resource Center in Francistown that will provide information and Christian counseling to youth infected or affected by HIV/AIDS.

The Bertsches are members of Grace Evangelical Mennonite Church, Morton, IL, and are supported through Evangelical Mennonite Church-U.S.

**Bryan & Teresa Born**  
**Benjamin, Katerina, Emily**



A five-month North America Assignment offered the Born family time

to speak in churches and encourage people to consider God's call to mission. One special highlight was having their Batswana friends, Gaseitsiwe and Orelebe Moathode, ministering along side them in Canada from Sept. 8 to Oct. 9.

In January Bryan, Teresa, Katie (14) and Emily (12) returned to Botswana. Ben (17) stayed behind with family in Canada to continue school. Bryan took a 4 month study leave through April to continue working toward a degree from the University of South Africa. He continues to teach Bible classes in Gaborone. Teresa is organizing and computerizing the records of the AIMM Bible teaching team.

The Borns are members of North Peace Mennonite Brethren Church in Fort St. John, BC. They are sponsored by MBMS International.

**Rudy & Sharon Dirks**  
**Nathan, Shawna, Stephanie**



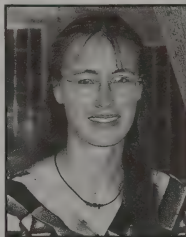
The Dirks family - Rudy, Sharon, Shawna (15), and Stephanie (13) returned to Gaborone, Botswana in January, 2002 after a refreshing two months in North America. Their son Nathan (18), stayed behind with his grandparents in Ontario to finish high school in Canada. In July Shawna also joined Nathan to attend Eden High School in St. Catharines.

Rudy is currently involved in Bible teaching and assisting churches and AIC pastors. Having recently handed over responsibilities of Coordinator of Tshepong Counseling Network to a local person, he continues to support on an advisory capacity. Sharon does ongoing counseling at Tshepong, does in-service training with counselors and teaches a women's group. Rudy and Sharon lead a growing married couples fellowship, as well as continuing to work closely with

St. Michael's Apostolic Church in youth work and leadership development

The Dirks are members of Bethany Mennonite Church, Virgil, ON, and Immanuel Baptist Church, Toronto, ON and are supported by Mennonite Church Canada.

**Lillian Haas**



September, 2002 is the scheduled time for Lillian Haas to return to Burkina Faso. During her 1- year NAA, Lillian spent much time speaking and itinerating. She

traveled to Indiana, Kansas, California, southern Manitoba, Pennsylvania, British Columbia, and Alberta. In November, she did 12 presentations in 8 days in schools, churches and youth groups. One of the biggest highlights for her was having her whole family present at Christmas for the first time in 10 years!

Upon her return to Burkina, Lillian will be studying the Jula language for 6 months before beginning work to revise and perfect the Siamou Orthography proposal. She will also be organizing a sub-committee for Siamou literacy and develop materials for beginning readers.

Lillian is a member of Bluesky Mennonite Church, in Bluesky, AB. She is sponsored by Mennonite Church Canada.

## One Family to Senegal

On June 1, 2002 an AIMM family returned to Senegal for their second term of ministry. During their one-year NAA they traveled and shared about how God is working in the hearts and lives of people in Senegal. They also took time to visit with family and friends. In April they visited a farm in Oklahoma to learn more about irrigation methods.

The team will be pursuing a specific proposal for using drip irrigation with peanuts to begin a small irrigation farming business in their city.

They are members of Calvary Mennonite, Washington, IL, and are supported by MC USA.



# New Missionaries to Africa

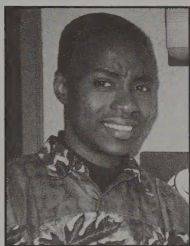
## Eric & Heidi Dyck Hilty



This summer Eric and Heidi Dyck Hilty will be leaving for Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso to serve as dorm parents for our missionary children. AIMM has few children needing this service presently so Eric will be teaching Math/Science to both Middle and High School students at the International School of Ouagadougou (ISO). Heidi will be available for teaching ESL on a freelance basis. Both Eric and Heidi have held teaching positions in local schools for the past ten years.

A desire to serve overseas brought the Dyck Hiltys to AIMM. Heidi is bilingual having grown up in Botswana the daughter of missionaries. Eric and she have been on short-term ministries overseas, and have had experience mentoring, guiding, and nurturing young people. They are members of Assembly Mennonite Church in Goshen, Indiana, and are sponsored by Mennonite Mission Network.

## Sublime Mabiala



On April 6, 2002 Sublime Mabiala, a young missionary from the Democratic Republic of Congo, arrived in Burkina Faso to work among the Nanerige Senufo

people. Sublime joins the AIMM missionary team, bringing gifts in evangelism and church planting. He is currently spending time learning the Jula language and adjusting to the culture in Burkina Faso. Later he will study the complex Nanerige language.

Sublime has worked in various cross-culture settings in the Congo, co-leading an Arabic-speaking church that ministered among Sudanese refugees as well as teaching a class at the Missiological Center in Kinshasa. For the last two years he supervised a daily Christian radio program. He is a member of the Kitambo Mennonite Brethren Church in the DR Congo and is sponsored by the Communauté des Eglises de Frères Mennonites au Congo and by MBMS International.

## MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

Apply now for one of these meaningful positions!

### BOTSWANA

#### —Bible Teacher with AICs

African Independent Churches (AICs) have invited AIMM to provide workers who will cultivate close relationships with AIC people, teach Bible and Bible-related subjects to church leaders, resource Batswana who lead Bible classes, and attend AIC worship services and special events. A Bible college or seminary degree is desired and the person must be committed to learn Setswana or Kalanga.

#### —Youth Pastor

A youth pastor is needed in the Open Baptist Church in Gaborone to oversee the ministry to both youth and university-age students, teach Christian discipleship and Bible, meet with students in formal and informal settings, and work with the senior pastor to coordinate ministry. The youth pastor would also give special attention to Mennonite Ministries missionary youth beyond the church setting. The person should be a graduate of university, Bible college or seminary and have ability to work with people of various cultural backgrounds.

### BURKINA FASO

#### —Linguists

A major ministry in Kenedougou Province is that of language analysis and Bible translation. The **Bolon** and the **Northern Toussian** people groups need God's Word in their highly complex tonal languages. Missionaries team with nationals in linguistics

analysis and translation. Training in linguistics, theology and missiology is required.

#### —Evangelists/Church Planters

Language analysis and Bible translation are done with the goal of evangelism and church planting. Evangelists and church planters are requested to team with linguists or national Christians in sharing God's Word. Strategies must be developed that are based on a mother-tongue approach, sensitive to the culture but presenting a Gospel that is true to Scripture. A degree in Missions is desired encompassing Biblical studies, cultural anthropology, cross-cultural communication and evangelism strategies for animistic and Muslim peoples.

Workers are requested for four people groups: Tagba, Bolon, Northern Toussian, Fulani.

### DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

#### —Development Worker

An agronomist or veterinarian is requested to direct a development service, train rural agricultural extension agents and relate to NGOs. The worker must enjoy rural living and have administrative experience.

#### —Doctor or Nurse

Medical personnel are requested to work in rural hospitals, encourage a Public Health Care program and train practical nurses. A certificate in Tropical Medicine is required.

#### —Evangelist

The Mennonite church in the Democratic Republic of Congo desires an evangelist to organize seminars, share experience in methodology with local leaders, and motivate Christians to evangelization. Ordination and experience in preaching are required.

### LESOTHO

#### —Bible Teacher

Workers are requested to assist in ministry in African Independent Churches. This would include teaching Bible classes, fraternal relationships, attendance at special events and serving as a pastoral resource person. Biblical studies and pastoral experience are needed.

### SENEGAL

#### —New Outreach

A team is being recruited for friendship evangelism. A degree in Bible studies and special study/orientation to Islam are essential.

### SOUTH AFRICA

#### —Bible Teacher

The assignment includes cultivating close relationships with AIC members, attending worship services and special celebrations, teaching Bible classes, and assisting in developing organizational structures. A strong personal faith in Christ, firm Biblical convictions, and a Bible College or Seminary degree are essential. Pastoral experience would be very helpful.



# AIMM NEWS

## AIMM Workers Return to North America

Each year some AIMM missionaries complete their ministry in Africa and resettle back in North America. It is with appreciation that we recognize the following long-term workers for their ministry.

—**Eugene Thieszen** began ministry with AIMM in Botswana in 1992. Eugene worked closely with African Independent Church leaders in a Bible teaching ministry. Through personal friendships and involvement with a local football team he had opportunity to share his faith in informal settings. In his last term he worked as a youth counselor at the Maun Counseling Center. He was sponsored by the General Conference Mennonite Church.

—**John & Charity Schellenberg** served as team leaders and church planters in Burkina Faso since September 1999. As team leaders they also worked closely with leaders of the Mennonite Church of Burkina Faso. They had earlier served as church planters among the Tagba people from 1987-89. They were sponsored by the Evangelical Mennonite Conference of Canada.

## Bonnie Kidder Becomes Stay-at-Home Mom

Early in 2002 Bonnie Kidder terminated her work as clerical assistant with AIMM to await the birth of their second child. Brody Dean joined the family of Bonnie and Derek on May 2. He was welcomed by his sister, Madison. Bonnie now gives her attention to the care of Madison and Brody.

We appreciated Bonnie's ministry at AIMM and pray God's blessing on the family.

Sharon Whitacre, who had been time-sharing with Bonnie, assumed full-time responsibilities of the position of clerical assistant.

## Short-Term Workers Bless Others

Several people heard God's call to short term involvement in Senegal in recent months. Through prayer walks, personal interaction with people, leading worship, teaching MKs, working with medical personnel and by their presence they blessed those with whom they came in contact.

Stanley and Alma Farmwald spent mid-October to mid-December in the country. In early January Doug and Karen Bontrager traveled with a small team of young people who desired to know how God may be leading them into future service. Dr. Michael Jagger, a pediatrician, spent 3 weeks in May working with medical personnel.

## Young People Plant A Seed in Botswana

A team of five young people and two adult leaders anticipate God's blessing as they minister and are ministered to June 16-29 in Botswana. Plant-A-Seed teams sponsored by the Evangelical Mennonite Church (EMC) provide opportunity for young people to share their faith with others cross-culturally and to better understand what is involved in responding to God's call to mission ministry.

Tim & Laura Bertsche and family, AIMM missionaries sponsored by EMC, will host the team. Activities include becoming better acquainted with the life and work of the Bertsches in Botswana, visit African Independent Churches, do some sightseeing and be involved in a service project. The project will be done at the Shining Stars Children's Club in Francistown. They will build playground and sports facilities, interact with the children in learning activities (puzzles, reading, writing, etc.) and playing games. Each day will close with a devotional time, Bible story and singing.

Team leaders are Ken and Connie VanNattan. Team members include: Tara Wyse, Katie Keffer, Brittany Pfleederer, Dustin Crawford and Ben Hunt.

## Mark Your Calendars for the AIMM Annual Picnic

August 10 is that important second Saturday of August in 2002 which means, of course, the date of the AIMM Annual Picnic. Pack your picnic basket and find your way to Oxbow Park in Elkhart to rendezvous with former AIMM workers and friends of AIMM from several states and Canada. Anyone with an interest in the ministry of AIMM is welcome.

Arrive at Cottonwood Shelter shortly before noon. Charcoal fires will be available to cook your own meat. Other items of the picnic lunches become the potluck meal to share with each other. Drinks are provided. If you come from a distance which makes transporting food difficult, come enjoy the bounty provided by others. Ministry updates will be given following the meal.

## AIMM History Books Available at Reduced Cost

*CIM/AIMM: A Story of Vision, Commitment and Grace* by Jim Bertsche is being sold at the reduced price of \$20 plus \$3 for shipping and handling in U.S. and \$15(US) in Canada. Don't miss reading how God has shown his power and grace through individuals in the building of his church.

Dr. Stan Nussbaum, Global Mapping International, says, "This is an insider's history — not a rambling memoir but a distilled analysis, meticulously researched and carefully presented. Of special missiological significance is the section on the highly experimental work of AIMM with African Independent Churches in southern Africa in recent decades, for which the author carried primary responsibility to shape policy. Anecdotal and analytical material combine to give this very readable work a ring of truth."

Books can be ordered from AIMM at 59466 C.R. 113, Elkhart, IN 46517-3644.



# AIMM DIRECTORY

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From Burkina Faso

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John-Mark, Maria

**Paul & Lois Thiessen - EMC/CAN**  
Josiah, Ruth, Jonathan, Caleb,  
Sarah,

Part-Time

**Stan Nussbaum - EMC/U.S.**  
5355 Astronomy Court  
Colorado Springs, CO 80907

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE

**Loren & Donna Entz - MC USA**  
Zach, Miriam, Aisha

## TERMINATION

**John and Charity Schelenberg -**  
**EMC/CAN**

**Eugene Thieszen - MC USA**

### Abbreviations for Supporting Groups

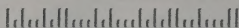
AIMM	Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission
EMC/CAN	Evangelical Mennonite Conference
EMC/U. S.	Evangelical Mennonite Church
EMMC	Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference
FM	French Mennonite
FOW	Friends of the Wolof
MB	Mennonite Brethren Church
MC Canada	Mennonite Church Canada
MC USA	Mennonite Church USA
MCC	Mennonite Central Committee
WA	Women's Auxiliary (AIMM)

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## Editorial

# AIMM in Celebration and Change

by Leona Schrag

Ninety years! Celebrate with us God's faithfulness!

Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission (Congo Inland Mission) has had the joy of being a voice and presence for God on the continent of Africa since 1912. The seed planted since 1912, through God's blessing, has grown and blossomed - thousands of lives changed, churches planted and nourished, friendships established and confidences earned. A garden of small beginnings has been much enlarged.

Celebrating a ninetieth anniversary in Africa is significant. Africans respect age greatly. Recently the senior member of the team in a West African country was responding to Bible questions posed by a young African man who came to visit. When she felt her language skills limited adequate explanation, she suggested to the young man that he discuss his concerns with a much younger member of the team. She didn't expect his response: "In our culture we go to the older people. I came to you because you are older and have lived long and are wise. You know much about the Bible. I can learn from you."

AIMM has "lived long and gained wisdom". Confidence has been earned through practical application of our biblical motto, "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as servants..." 2 Corinthians 4:5. Servant leadership has empowered African church leaders to take responsibility, leadership and ownership. We celebrate the beauty of what God has grown through planted and watered seed.

In this process of growth, change has been inevitable. Structures, strategies, personnel and priorities of 1912 look very different in 2002. Because of carefully designed change (pruning and transplanting), coupled with perseverance in maintaining essentials (nurturing and feeding), celebration is possible in the ninetieth year of AIMM ministry as we walk through this garden of God's planting!

However, walking through the garden in celebration also gives occasion to ask what new pruning and transplanting are necessary to further enhance the garden. The AIMM Council took action in April to move forward in redesigning. Details of the design have not been determined but redesigning a well-established, appreciated garden demands deliberate, careful planning.

What needs pruning? Where is transplanting appropriate? Do some plants need nurturing and feeding? Trees periodically shed their leaves to sprout new ones; yet, the trunk remains year after year. What should be done with a ninety, sixty or forty year old tree in the garden? Should we dismantle this garden and transplant the entities to form several smaller gardens? Would such smaller gardens maintain any connection to the original garden or to each other? Do we need a clear, precise blueprint for the new design before we begin pruning, transplanting, discarding? What costs will be incurred immediately for the new design? What are cost estimates long-term? What will be the ultimate advantages or disadvantages of redesign?

Only God the Master Designer has the answers to these and multiple other questions. Please pray with us for discernment, obedience and faithfulness in managing this 90-year old garden of God's planting.

## AIMM Council

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Peter Rempel	Chairperson, MC Canada
Tim Bergdahl	Vice-chairperson, MB
Steve Wiebe Johnson	Secretary, MC USA
Leonard Sawatzky	Financial Consultant, EMMC
Len Barkman	Member-at-large, EMC/CAN
Earl Cecil	Member-at-large, EMC/U.S.

### Council Members

Martini Janz	WA
Nzash Lumeya	MB
Janet Plenert	MC Canada

## Conferences

EMC/CAN	Evangelical Mennonite Conference	MB	Mennonite Brethren Church
EMC/U.S.	Evangelical Mennonite Church	MC Canada	Mennonite Church Canada
EMMC	Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference	MC USA	Mennonite Church USA